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**By Admiral Stansfield Turner**

# A Look Inside The CIA Complex

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As Northern Virginians, we all have a mysterious, forbidding and secretive neighbor in McLean — the CIA. What is it like inside that fenced enclave? In 1977, I attempted to open the CIA grounds to guided tours for the public, much as the FBI does. That proved to be impractical.

Why? Because we found that there would not be enough that could be opened up to make a tour interesting. Why so much secrecy?

First because we must protect our sources of information. Some of these are talented people; others are expensive technical systems, like satellites. If we talk too much about them they won't be of much use to us in the future.

Beyond that we also need to hold onto information which the United States has and other nations do not know we have. For instance, if we know another nation's negotiating position before negotiations with them begin, we are at a considerable advantage, but only if we can keep our secrets.

Some people feel that the CIA already gets too much publicity and should be even more secretive. There is no other organization in the world conducting espionage that receives as much publicity as the CIA.

In part that is because we are the most open country in the world and place our government under greater public scrutiny than anywhere else. In part, though, it is also because we are the only country in the free world with a major intelligence activity that places so many different elements of intelligence in one organization, the CIA.

Elsewhere espionage activities are buried deep in the bureaucracy so that they do not receive public attention. We chose, in creating the CIA, to coordinate espionage activities with the other two key elements of intelligence, technical collection and analysis by placing them all in one organization.

One point we Northern Virginians should keep in mind is that we have some very interesting neighbors in those people who work behind those secret fences. For instance the analysis department must cover political intelligence, military intelligence and economic intelligence and to do so must have a wide variety of skilled personnel, ranging from economists to political scientists to psychologists to historians and on and on. The technical department has many physicists, chemists, electronics specialists and almost every other type of scientific talent.

Thus, our neighbors at Langley are a highly talented group of people who represent almost all of the academic disciplines. There are probably more advanced degrees inside that mysterious compound than anywhere else in our government.

Beyond that, they are a very dedicated group of government servants. If you look carefully at night when you drive past on Route 123 or the George Washington Parkway, you will always see some lights burning into the wee hours. These neighbors of ours work hard and well. They are doing an important job for our country for which they get little credit.

If a mistake is ever made the public usually hears about it, but if the ac-



cusation is incorrect it usually cannot be denied because doing so would give away some secret. Their best successes are closely guarded secrets.

I remember well my reaction after about three months as the CIA's Director. I went home one evening and said to my wife, "I wish that I could only tell you what those people did today! It was magnificent!" I kept on watching them do the same kind of things for four years. I'm sure it is the same today.

When we drive by the CIA, we should all be grateful that these neighbors are serving us as citizens so well. Even if just what they are doing has to be a mystery, you and I can be confident that some of the finest public servants in our government are in that compound working to protect each of us and our country.